

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-09 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-10
OMB-01 TRSE-00 MMO-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02
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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA
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AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY Dacca
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO

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PLEASE PASS USDEL TO INDIAN OCEAN WORKING GROUP AT OOB FRI.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, XO, UR

SUBJECT: WHITE HOUSE STATEMENTS ON INDIAN OCEAN WORKING
GROUP TALKS

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1.FOLLOWING IS EXCERPT FROM THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS TO THE
PRESS ON JUNE 22 FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH AUSTRALIAN
PRIME MINISTER FRASER:

QUESTION: MR. PRESIDENT, WAS THERE DISCUSSION OF THE
DEMILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN?

THE PRESIDENT: YES, THERE WAS. THE PRIME MINISTER WILL
ANSWER QUESTIONS THIS AFTERNOON. BUT THERE WAS A DISCUSS-
ION. I AM JUST GOING TO ANSWER THAT ONE QUESTION, BUT NO
MORE.

BUT WE DID DISCUSS THE DEMILITARIZATION--(INAUDIBLE)--IN
MOSCOW UNDER THE LEADERSHIP FOR OUR COUNTRY, PAUL WARNKE.
OUR BASIC HOPE IS THAT WE CAN STABILIZE THE STATUS QUO IN
THE INDIAN OCEAN AND REFRAIN FROM ANY FURTHER ESCALATIONS.
THIS POSITION IS SUPPORTED VERY STRONGLY BY AUSTRALIA.

WE HAVE ALSO, OBVIOUSLY, COMMITTED OURSELVES TO CONSULT
VERY CLOSELY WITH PRIME MINISTER FRASER AND OTHER LEADERS

IN AUSTRALIA AND THE OTHER NATIONS THAT BORDER THE INDIAN
OCEAN BEFORE ANY FINAL AGREEMENT IS REACHED. WE HOPE THAT
WE CAN HAVE PROGRESS.

WE DON'T YET HAVE ANY INDICATION AS TO WHAT THE SOVIETS'
POSITION MIGHT BE. BUT OUR FIRST HOPE, AND WITHOUT DELAY,

IS THAT WE MIGHT PREVENT ANY FURTHER BUILD-UP OF MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN; LATER, PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF ANY MILITARY MOVEMENTS THERE; AND PERHAPS LATER ON SOME REDUCTION IN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF MILITARY PRESENCE, WHICH IS FAIRLY LOW AT THIS TIME.

IS THERE A FOLLOW-UP TO THAT?

QUESTION: AND THE REASON I THINK THEY ASKED ABOUT THE UNCLASSIFIED

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INDIAN OCEAN WAS WHAT BREZHNEV SAID ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW COLD WAR.

THE PRESIDENT: NO, I THINK THAT IS AN ADEQUATE ANSWER.

2. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM JODY POWELL'S PRESS BRIEFING OF JUNE 22 ON PRESIDENT'S TALKS WITH AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER FRASER AND US-SOVIET TALKS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN:

MR. POWELL: OBVIOUSLY, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN TO AUSTRALIA WAS NOTED. THE PRESIDENT ASSURED THE PRIME MINISTER THAT AUSTRALIA'S VIEWS WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN ANY ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENT IN THAT AREA.

THE PRIME MINISTER STATED THAT IT WAS NOT IN THE REGION'S INTERESTS TO HAVE A COMPETITIVE ESCALATION OF ARMS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, BUT RATHER THAT THE MILITARY BALANCE SHOULD BE AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL.

QUESTION: JODY, ON THE OPENING OF THE TALKS ABOUT THE INDIAN OCEAN IN MOSCOW TODAY, THERE IS A QUOTE THAT SAYS: "AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE IS REALLY NO SUBSTANTIAL COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP IT THAT WAY." DOES THAT MEAN WE ARE NEGOTIATING KEEPING FORCES AT THE SAME LEVEL? AND, AGAIN, TO FOLLOW CHARLIE'S QUESTION, IF WE ARE GOING TO LOWER OUR FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND IN KOREA AND THAILAND AND EVERYWHERE ELSE, DO YOU MAINTAIN A STRONG SECURITY POSITION WITHOUT TROOPS, IS THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE ADMINISTRATION?

MR. POWELL: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE DETAILS, WHICH ARE AVAILABLE, OF AMERICAN FORCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, I CAN DO THAT AT SOME LATER DATE. AND ALSO, WITH REGARD UNCLASSIFIED

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TO YOUR OTHER--WHO WERE YOU QUOTING?

QUESTION: I THINK IT IS WARNKE. YES, MR. WARNKE.

MR. POWELL: OKAY. WHAT THE POSSIBILITIES ARE, WITH REGARD TO THE INDIAN OCEAN, IS SOMETHING THAT IS NOT YET POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE; THAT THE DISCUSSIONS, AS YOU KNOW, ARE JUST COMMENCING, AND WHETHER--

QUESTION: I WAS ASKING ABOUT THE AMERICAN GOALS. IS IT TO MAINTAIN THE SITUATION AS IT IS, OR TO CUT FROM IT, OR WHAT?

MR. POWELL: IT DEPENDS UPON WHAT THE POSSIBILITIES ARE. OBVIOUSLY, THE OVERALL GOAL IS TO NOT BECOME INVOLVED, AS WE HAVE STATED HERE, IN SOME TYPE OF ARMS RACE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

QUESTION: THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS DEMILITARIZATION, IS IT NOT? THAT IS THE LANGUAGE THE PRESIDENT USES. THAT MEANS NOT JUST AN INCREASE BUT A PULLING OUT OF.

MR. POWELL: CERTAINLY, AS THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID, IF WE CAN ARRIVE AT A SITUATION IN WHICH NEITHER OF US WERE INVOLVED THERE, THAT WOULD BE AN ULTIMATE GOAL.

QUESTION: DOES THE PRESIDENT WANT TO MAINTAIN THAT GOAL, OR DOES HE WANT A MILITARY BALANCE? THAT WOULD MEAN AUSTRALIA WON'T HAVE A NAVY AT ALL. THAT IS WHERE IT BECOMES RELEVANT TO THIS VISIT.

MR. POWELL: OBVIOUSLY IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT. THE POSITION OF OTHER NATIONS, INCLUDING AUSTRALIA, IN SUCH AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION

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IS SOMETHING THAT ALSO HAS TO BE WORKED OUT. BUT CLEARLY THE IDEA THAT THIS GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED THE CONDUCT OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WOULD DENY AUSTRALIA A NAVY IS ABSURD.

QUESTION: I AM SORRY. WHAT WAS THE LAST SENTENCE?

MR. POWELL: ABSURD.

QUESTION: WHAT IS ABSURD?

MR. POWELL: IT WAS APPLIED TO YOUR CONTENTION THAT WE WERE NEGOTIATING WITH THE SOVIETS, THE DISSOLUTION OF THE

AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

QUESTION: I DIDN'T CONTEND THAT, AND CHARLIE DIDN'T CONTEND THAT WITH WHAT HE SAID. YOU ARE ANSWERING ALL YOUR QUESTIONS WITH RIDICULE TODAY, AND THESE ARE NOT ANSWERS, JODY.

MR. POWELL: I UNDERSTOOD YOUR STATEMENT TO BE THAT OUR ANNOUNCED OBJECTIVES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WERE SUCH THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD BE PROHIBITED FROM HAVING A NAVY.

QUESTION: THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT THEY ARE SUPPOSEDLY UPSET ABOUT. IT IS AN UNFORTUNATE WORD IN THEIR VIEW.

MR. POWELL: IF THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA FELT THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS CONDUCTING SUCH NEGOTIATIONS WITH SUCH AN END IN MIND, HE CERTAINLY DID NOT INDICATE SUCH IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT. AS I SAID IN MY INITIAL STATEMENT, THE PRESIDENT DID STRESS OUR DESIRE TO CONSULT AND WORK CLOSELY WITH THE AUSTRALIANS
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AS THESE DISCUSSIONS PROCEED.

3. FOLLOWING IS EXCERPT FROM ARTICLE BY MURREY MARDER IN JUNE 23 WASHINGTON POST ENTITLED, "US DOWNGRADES GOAL IN INDIAN OCEAN":

BEGIN TEXT: PRESIDENT CARTER AND AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER MALCOLM FRASER AGREED YESTERDAY ON THE CURRENT GOAL OF SEEKING A FREEZE, OR "BALANCE," OF AMERICAN AND SOVIET MILITARY FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THE COMMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE VISITING AUSTRALIAN LEADER SHOWED THAT US OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN DOWNGRADED IN THE AMERICAN-SOVIET TALKS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN, WHICH BEGAN IN MOSCOW YESTERDAY.

THE INITIAL CARTER TARGET WAS "COMPLETE DEMILITARIZATION" OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

A REDUCED AMERICAN GOAL IN THE MOSCOW TALKS WAS ALSO CONFIRMED INDIRECTLY BY PAUL C. WARNKE, CHIEF US NEGOTIATOR IN THE TALKS. AS THEY BEGIN, WARNKE SAID THERE IS NO SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. "WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP IT THAT WAY," HE ADDED.

MOSCOW BROADCASTS YESTERDAY REITERATED THE SOVIET CONTENTION THAT THE ONLY FOREIGN MILITARY BASE IN THE REGION IS THE AMERICAN MILITARY INSTALLATION ON THE ISLAND OF

DIEGO GARCIA.

WESTERN OFFICIALS COUNTER THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE A NAVAL BASE IN SOMALIA. THE SOVIET UNION AND SOMALIA INSIST IT IS NOT "A BASE," AND THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE ONLY NAVAL TRANSIT RIGHTS.

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AUSTRALIA, WHICH RELIES ON AMERICAN MILITARY POWER, STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE US BASE ON BRITISH-OWNED DIEGO GARCIA. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S TALK OF DEMILITARIZING THE REGION, PLUS ITS PLANS FOR WITHDRAWING AMERICAN GROUND TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA, HAS TROUBLED FRASER'S GOVERNMENT.

PRESIDENT CARTER ASSURED FRASER YESTERDAY, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JODY POWELL SAID, THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL REMAIN "A MAJOR POWER IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AND WOULD MAINTAIN A STRONG SECURITY POSITION IN THE REGION."

AFTER HIS TALKS WITH FRASER, THE PRESIDENT TOLD NEWSMEN THAT IN THE CURRENT MOSCOW TALKS ON THE INDIAN OCEAN, THE UNITED STATES SEEKS AGREEMENT TO "STABILIZE THE STATUS QUO AND REFRAIN FROM FURTHER (MILITARY) ESCALATION."

HE SAID THIS POSITION IS "STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY AUSTRALIA."
END TEXT -

4. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 23:

QUESTION: YESTERDAY PRESIDENT CARTER INDICATED THAT THE US GOAL IN THE US-SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN TALKS, CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN MOSCOW, IS TO STABILIZE THE US AND SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA. PREVIOUSLY HE HAS INDICATED THAT OUR GOAL IS THE "COMPLETE DEMILITARIZATION" OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. WHY HAVE WE DOWNGRADED OUR OBJECTIVES?

ANSWER: WE THINK THAT IT WOULD BE IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST TO AVOID AN ESCALATING US-SOVIET ARMS RACE IN THE AREA. THE TALKS NOW UNDERWAY IN MOSCOW CONSTITUTE THE INITIAL MEETING OF THE US SOVIET WORKING GROUP ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.
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WE SEE THESE TALKS AS CONSTITUTING A PROCESS LEADING IN THE FIRST INSTANCE TO THE STABILIZATION OF THE US AND SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION. BUT WE THINK THIS WILL BE A CONTINUING PROCESS AND ARE READY TO CONSIDER LATER ON REDUCTIONS IN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF MILITARY PRESENCE.

QUESTION: YESTERDAY THERE WAS A CONFUSING EXCHANGE AT JODY

POWELL'S PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT THE EFFECT ON AUSTRALIA'S NAVY OF THE US-SOVIET TALKS. CAN YOU CLARIFY THIS?

ANSWER: THE TALKS IN MOSCOW ARE BILATERAL AND WOULD NOT

CONCERN AUSTRALIA'S MILITARY ACTIVITIES.

QUESTION: IF FURTHER PRESSED TO EXPLAIN THE US POSITION
ON DEMILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

ANSWER: YESTERDAY JODY POWELL STATED THAT THE PRESIDENT
HAS SAID IF WE CAN ARRIVE AT A SITUATION IN WHICH NEITHER
OF US WERE INVOLVED THERE, THAT WOULD BE AN ULTIMATE
GOAL.

5. QUESTION ON ADMINISTRATION'S GOALS IN INDIAN OCEAN
TALKS WITH SOVIETS WAS ASKED AT JUNE 23 DEPARTMENT PRESS
BRIEFING. WILL CABLE TEXT OF SPOKESMAN'S REPLY, WHICH
DREW ON ABOVE PRESS GUIDANCE, WHEN AVAILABLE. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 23-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment:
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